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## Birds' Homes

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The nest is not only a place where birds sleep and rest. More important, it is a place where they lay eggs and bring up their babies.



When Mother Bird is going to lay eggs, she and Father Bird will start to build a nest, singing as they work.

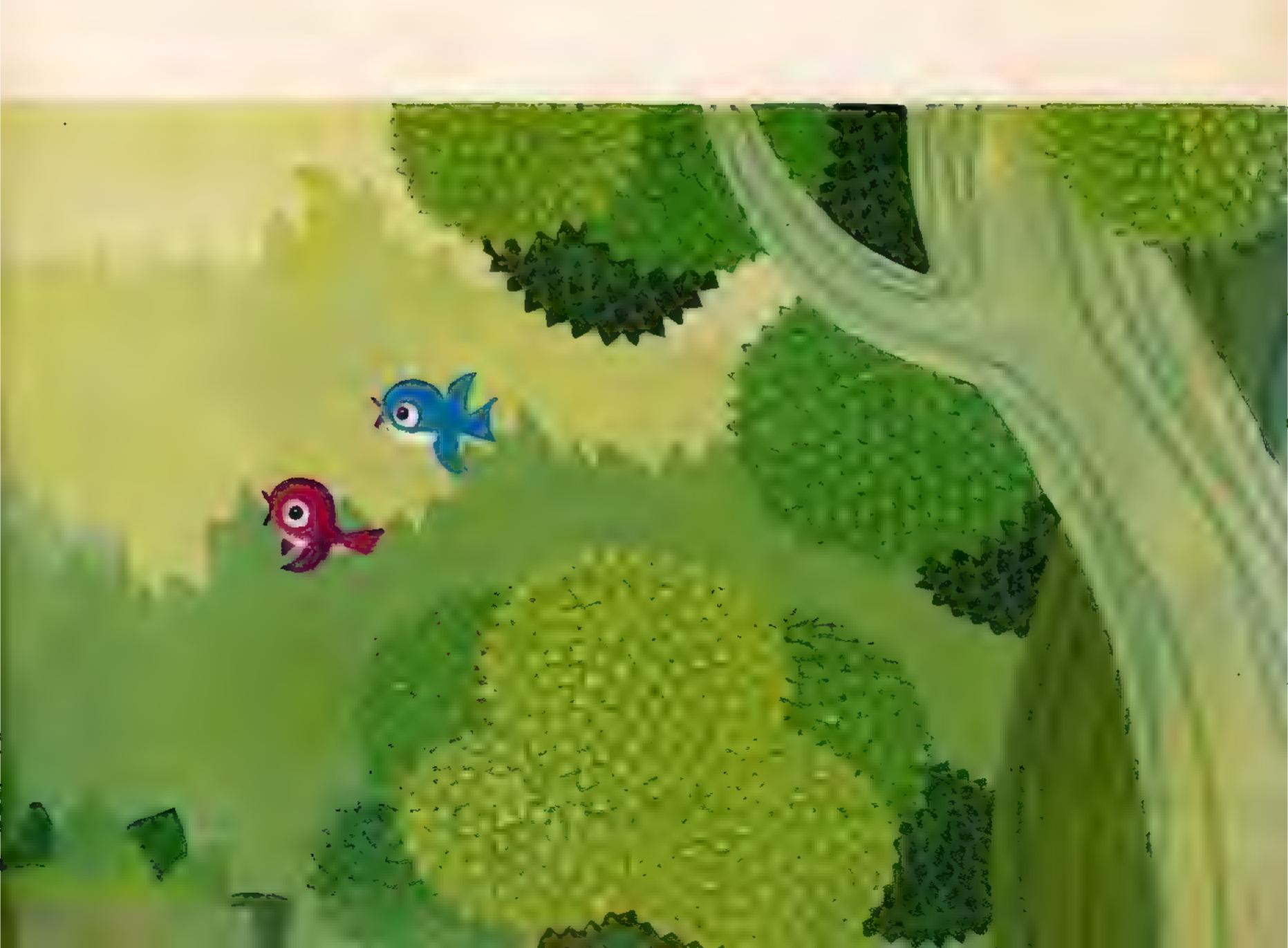








After the young birds have flown off to make their own living, Mother and Father also leave their nest.









The magpie builds its nest by making a cushion of branches first, then covering it with twigs and finally plastering it with mud. Some of the magpie nests are roofed over with branches.







A crow's nest is also very big; it is similar to a magpie's nest.







In China, some people call the swallow "the clever bird", because its nest is very skilfully made, like a hollowed gourd.







The best nest-builder is the tailorbird that lives in the busines in south China. It gathers together banana and other leaves with its pointed bill, makes some holes in them and then sews them together with plant fibres as threads. The most interesting thing is that it can make a knot at the end of each thread.





The weaverbird's nest looks like a bottle or a pear. It is constructed by the birds in pairs, which weave their nest using their bills as shuttles and grass fibres as thread.



Look at this nest hanging on the branch. The upper part is a hollow ball, where Mother Weaver hatches her eggs, and under it is a long entrance which prevents snakes and other natural enemies from entering the nest.



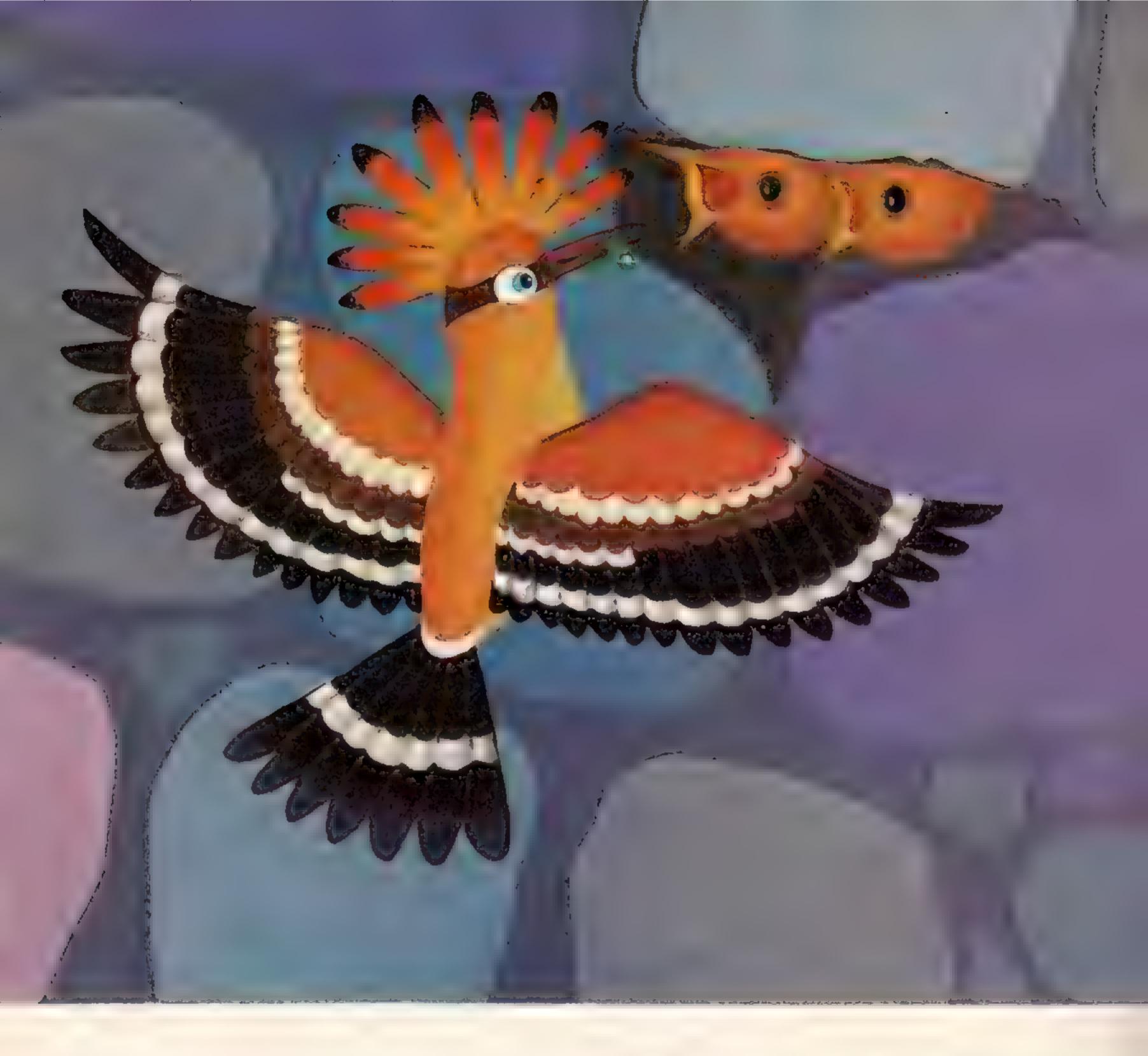


with only a few small stones.

The kingfisher is also called the "fisherman" or "fish dog" in China. It is very handsome. The feathers on its back are jade green and the feathers on its chest are yellow. It catches fish and shrimps in the water with its sharp, long bill.







The hoopoe's habits are similar to the kingfisher's. Hoopoes make their homes in holes in walls or in tree trunks.



















Many birds are good friends of human beings. Children can make some wooden boxes of different sizes and shapes with small holes in them and hang them on a tree or a wall, so that nice birds can make their homes there and help catch harmful insects.







鸟 儿 的 家 榮 子 獎文 吳帝生 绘画

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